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The Muslim Voice

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The Islamic Cause of Palestine

A cause we cannot ignore

By IAP Office

Palestine is a strategic land due to both its religious significance and geographic location. Throughout history it has been the center of the conflict and struggle between the Muslim World and Western Christendom. In the past century it has also become the center of the struggle between the Muslim World and the Jews.

The significance of Palestine in the Islamic faith and throughout Islamic History is second only to the significance of Mecca and Madina.

IN ISLAMIC FAITH

The greatest significance of Palestine for the Muslims is that it contains Baitul-Maqdis, the holiest place in Islam outside of the Hijaz. Both Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock are built in the area of the Baitul-Maqdis.

Baitul-Maqdis in Palestine was the first Qibla (direction in which Muslims face when praying). The Muslims faced towards Baitul-Maqdis when praying during the entire Meccan period of Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life and for the first 16 months of the Medinian period, after which Allah ordered the Qibla to be changed towards the Kaaba in Mecca.

Muslims consider prayers in Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa to be equivalent to 500 times the prayers in any other mosque except for the Harams in Mecca and Madina. In the Hadith Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "Prayers in Al-Masjid Al-Haram are equivalent to 100,000 prayers, and prayers in my Masjid (in Madina) are equivalent to 1000 prayers, and prayers in Baitul-Maqdis are equivalent to 500 prayers." [Tabarani]

IN ISLAMIC HISTORY

The history of Palestine represents the history of Islam from the first prophet of Islam,

Adam (PBUH), to the last prophet of Islam, Muhammad (PBUH). Palestine is the land of prophets who were sent with the message of Islam and hence should not be ruled by anyone other than those who uphold the message of Islam by implementing its laws and regulations.

Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa was the second mosque established on earth forty years after the establishment of Al-Masjid Al-Haram.

Palestine was brought under Muslim control at the time of Umar ibn al-Khattab, the second Khalifa of the Muslims. Palestine was then made part of the Islamic state being ruled by Islamic law. The new laws were welcomed not only by the Muslims but also by the Jews and Christians of palestine who had formerly been living under the tyrannical Byzantine yoke. The Byzantines were persecuting the Christians of the area because the Palestinian Christians belonged to a different Christian sect. The Muslims however guaranteed all Christians freedom of religion regardless of their sect.

In 1099 A.D. Palestine was invaded by the European Crusaders and subsequently occupied for nearly a century. During the occupation massacres and great injustices were committed against the Muslim, Jewish and native Christian residents of the area. The only law applied in the holy land blessed by God was the law of force and persecution.

In 1187 A.D. Palestine was liberated by the Muslims under the leadership of Salah al-Din Al-Ayyubi who brought back Islamic law to the area.

In 1916 the Arab elites announced their revolt against the Ottoman Islamic Empire at the instigation of the British who promised the Arabs an "Arab" rather than "Islamic" Kingdom.

In 1917 the British government issued the Balfour Declaration which declared Palestine to be a homeland for Jews. At the time Jews made up approximately 8% of the population of Palestine and owned approximately 2.5% of the land.

In 1918 the British and their Arab nationalist allies defeated the Ottomans. The British dismembered the Ottoman Empire and occupied Palestine. The British immediately began a campaign of immigrating European Jews to Palestine.

In 1948 The Jews claimed the establishment of a state for themselves over the land of Palestine and called it Israel. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims were forced out of Palestine under the military pressure of Jewish terrorist groups such as the Irgun, Levi, and Haganot which were financed and armed by the British army.

In 1967 Israel attacked Egypt, Jordan and Syria and occupied more land including for the first time Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa. Since that time Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa has been the target of several attempts by the Jews to destroy or burn it, including several attempts to bring about its collapse through underground excavations. The Jews Know that

(Continued on page 7)

Tim Horton's Pigs

Lard aplenty in menu

CONSUMER REPORT

For those who haven't been made aware of the latest product information release from Tim Hortons, here is a verbatim letter from Tim Horton's Head Office.

The following is a list of the Tim Hortons products which contain "animal fat":

- All Yeast, Sour Cream, Cruller, Honey Stick, Walnut Crunch,
- Chocolate Cake and Macaroon Crunch Donuts
- All Glazed Donuts
- Dutch Apple and Oatbran Date 'n Orange Muffins
- All Buttercream Iced Cakes, all Creamy Lite Iced Cakes and Carrot Cake
- All Pies, Tarts and Cookies
- All Soups and Sandwiches
- All Brownies, Cherry Cheese Danish and Pecan Sticky Buns

The "animal fat" is a result of the use of mono and dyglycerides that are made up of lard and therefore leave traces of lard in our donuts.

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The donut glaze used at Tim Hortons has a small chemical composition which contains traces of "animal fat" from gelatin.

If you have any questions please call (905) 339-6111.

This Month's Feature:

Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali Remembered

Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali (1017 - 11006) passed away last month. This feature, which includes an article by Dr Yusuf al-Qaradawi, looks back at the life and work of a great man.

The Muslim Voice is undergoing many changes.

To get involved, or to find out more about what is happening, please see Page 2.

The Muslim Voice is an independent monthly Toronto-area student newspaper produced by the Toronto MSAs

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What we should be doing?

EDITORIAL COMMENT

A constant strand emerges once Muslims start talking: we should do more of 'this' and 'this' and that "there is a real need for us to do This instead of That..."

We should wonder: WHY???

The Question Why

What it comes down to is that we are trying to earn the Pleasure of Allah and that on the collective level, the Ummatic dimension, this means that we need to strive towards "iqaamat ad-din" (establishing the din).

This is the Islamic Mission. It is not "lets do THIS" or "lets do THAT"... This Mission that we are entrusted with has a Methodology, which is given to us by Allah (SWT) and shown to us in the Way of the Prophet (SAW), and the understanding of our pious predecessors, martyrs, scholars and the righteous.

This Mission is one whose vision must be comprehensive for it to be successful; it must be a balanced approach, it must be based on the ideals of Islam and an understanding of the realities of society; it must be clear in its ways and means, and its root inspiration must be the same as what the Prophet (SAW) had.

Bases for Action

In this Mission, action must have a solid basis, a firm understanding and a clarity of goals.

Given the preciousness of this Mission, we can't go for "half-baked" responses.

While every good deed is, by definition, good, the best of deeds are those done *completely* the Way the Prophet (SAW) did them, and that means doing them as part of a larger mission to establish Islam.

After all, if we don't know where we are going, are we any more than mere blind, deaf and dumb people?

And how much can we achieve?

May Allah grant us a clear understanding of this Deen; may He grant us the sweetness of iman and make us Callers unto the Truth, rightly-guided.

PROPHETIC WISDOM

Mu`adh ibn Jabal, may Allah be pleased with him, relates that the Prophet, may Allah Bless him and grant him Peace, told him:

Fail not to say at the end of every salat *(prayer):* My Lord! Help me in remembering You; in thanking you; and in worshipping You in the best way.

Allahumma a`innee `ala dhikrika, wa shukrika, wa `ala husni `ibaadatika!

(Reported in Ahmad, Abu Dawud, Nasa'i)

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The Muslim Voice

The Muslim Voice has the following openings:

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— Finance Manager
— Graphics Artists
— Staff Writers
— Editing Staff
— Layout Staff

If you are willing to get involved in *The Muslim Voice*, please call Faraz at (416) 695-1636 or e-mail him at frabbani@epas.utoronto.ca

The Passing Time

By Shireen Ahmed

I was at a camp last summer. A youth camp. You know... one of those places Muslim parents send their kids to, hoping that something within that Islamic atmosphere could potentially *affect* the people who chose to go.

Thinking back to that camp, I remember one particular evening after maghrib salat. One of the counsellors had stood up and had begun to tell us a story.

He told us how only minutes ago he had been walking towards the very hall in which we were all seated. While he had been walking, the brother had commented to one of the younger campers how incredible the passage of time is.

Imagine...

"Imagine.", he said. "Right now we are hiking up this steep trail to go and do our salat. The next thing you know, you are finished salat and will be starting your dinner. When one looks back, the time difference between the two events will seem like only a split second.

"One minute you are in one place, next minute you are in another. The time it takes to move from one action to the next seems so insignificant. But time moves quickly."

And yet, as our young counsellor further commented, "It will seem like a very short period of time within this chain of events that you will find yourself standing before your Creator, having to account for your deeds."

You...

Imagine. You are sitting there right now, reading The Muslim Voice. Next thing you know, maybe you'll be heading to your next class, or just stepping onto the TTC heading home. A SPLIT SECOND. At least that is how it seems upon reflection.

It has been related by Ibn Shaddad al-Fahri that the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, said:

"This world, in comparison with the world to come, is the same as if one of you were to put his finger in the ocean. Consider how much (water) you would have when you pulled it out." (Muslim)

Only a few drops at most would fall from your fingers, which would seem incomparable to the amount of water within the ocean. Likewise, the amount of time we spend in this life will seem like nothing compared to the *akhirah* (life after death).

Usage...

With time passing so quickly, I think we need to ask ourselves how we are using our time... will our chosen actions be helpful or harmful to us on the Day of Judgement?

Do we even take that day into account before we decide on a course of action? Have we sufficiently prepared ourselves to be judged?

I often think back to that particular day at camp. It seems like just a short time ago. Time is continuously in motion. Make the most of it.

Shireen Ahmed is Features Editor for The Muslim Voice.

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O Allah! Grant us the sweetness of iman and make us callers to the Truth, rightly guided.

Media Madness

Reporters barge into Denver Mosque, mocking Muslims... CAIR protests... 5 accept Islam...

(WASHINGTON, DC)

The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a Washington-based Islamic advocacy organization, organized a nation-wide protest again three men who attacked a Denver, Co., mosque last month.

The Abul-Rauf Connection

The men, one wearing a mock turban and a Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf T-shirt, burst into the mosque after morning worship prayers. According to local law enforcement officials, the men, all employees of a local radio station, then proceeded to harass and intimidate the worshipers.

One man played the national anthem on a trumpet, while another allegedly attempted to force headphones on two worshipers. (Denver Nuggets [illegible] to stand for the playing of the national anthem.)

CAIR has condemned the attack and is demanding that the perpetrators be prosecuted to the full extent of the law and that they be dismissed from their positions with the radio station.

Through CAIR's protest, the radio station made an official apology, and compensated the Muslim community by sponsoring media training programs for Muslims.

Open House

The mosque organized an open-house for the Denver community at large for which several thousand people showed up.

At the open house, five people accepted Islam, by taking the *Shahada*.

Routine Targets

"As we saw following the tragic bombing in Oklahoma City, American Muslims are routinely targeted by those who hold stereotypical views of the Islam and Muslims. Intolerance is a disease that can only be cured through education and mutual understanding," said CAIR Executive Director Nihad Awad.

— Based on a press-release from CAIR.

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Identity Card

by Mahmoud Darwish

Write down
I am an Arab
I am a name without a family name
I am patient in a country where everything
lives by the eruption of anger.
My roots
gripped down before time began
before the blossoming of ages
before cypress trees and olive trees
... before grass sprouted.
My father
is from the family of the plough
not from a noble line
and my grandfather
was a peasant
without nobility, without genealogy !
and my house is a crop-warden's shack
built of sticks and reeds.
Does my social status satisfy you ?
I am a name without a family name.
Write down
I am an Arab.
You usurped my my grandfather's vineyards
And the land I used to plough
I and all my children
and you left us
and all my grandchildren
nothing but these rocks...so
your government,
will it take them too as rumour has it ?
So be it
Write down at the top of the first page:
I do not hate people.
I steal from no-one.
However.
if I am hungry
I will eat the flesh of my usurper
Beware of my hunger
and of my anger.

Dhikr — Its Purpose and Benefits

Sheikh al-Haddad's Explanation of Common Formulae and their Benefits

"O ye who believe! remember Allah, with much remembrance; And glorify Him morning and evening." (Qur'an, 33:41-42)

Dhikr (the Remembrance of Allah) holds a high rank of importance in Islam. It has clear and distinct manners, which can be carried out in many different ways.

The Importance of Dhikr

"The Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, used to remember Allah (SWT) in all cases and situations." (Dawud, Tirmidhi, Muslim)

Dhikr develops *taqwa* (the consciousness of Allah) and *tawakkul* (trust in Allah), which are important aspects of *iman* (faith).

A man once told the Prophet (SAW), "The roads to good are many and I am unable to take all of them, so please tell me something to which I can hold fast, but do not overburden me lest I forget it." The Prophet (SAW) replied, " Make sure that your tongue is moist and supple with the remembrance of Allah, the Exalted."(At-Tirmidhi)

The Rewards and the Formulae

Sheikh al-Haddad gives a beautiful explanation of some of the more common dhikr.

"Subhanallah" [Tasbih] "Glorified is Allah"

Tasbih is an affirmation of the transcendence and holiness of the Real. It is to believe in His exaltation and His being totally beyond comparison as regards His Essence, attributes, and actions...

Its result is to make one's *tawhid* (belief in the Oneness of God) clear and unblemished, and to fill up the heart with the glory of Allah, and the uniqueness of His perfection. "To Him is the highest analogy in the heavens and on earth." [30: 27]

"La ilaha ill'allah" [Tahlil] "There is no god but Allah"

Tahlil brings forth a renewal of one's faith in Allah.

"Allahu Akbar" [Takbir] "Allah is Greater"

Takbir inspires reverence and magnification of Him Who is the Possessor of Majesty [*dhu'l-jalal*].

"Alhamdulillah" [Tahmid] "All Praise is for Allah"

Tahmid develops gratitude (*shukr*), firm hope, and love of Allah - for it is inevitable that one who does good will be loved.

"La Hawla wa la quwwata illa billah" [Hawqala] "There is no strength nor power save by Allah"

"Hasbuna'llah wa ni`ma'l wakeel" [Hasbala] "Allah is enough for us, and a fine Guardian"

The *Hawqala* and the *Hasbala* result in reliance [tawakkul] on Allah, surrendering the management of one's affairs to Him, and placing one's trust in Him.

Istighfar, particularly by repeating "Astaghfirullah" ("I seek the forgiveness of Allah")

Istighfar results in upright piety, care about the conditions necessary for repentance, and extricating oneself from snares of rebellion.

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Remembering SHEIKH MUHAMMAD AL-GHAZALI (1917 - 1996)

Last month, the Muslim world lost one of its leading and most loved scholars. This feature looks at the life and work of a remarkable man. May Allah accept his work and grant him the highest levels of Paradise.

In Farewell of Sheikh Al-Ghazali
And finally ... the star dropped!

By Sheikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi

Al-Ghazali Remembered

Sheikh Al-Ghazali died, in the midst of the fight without casting aside his weapon, without folding the sail of his ship. On the contrary, he kept fighting the waves and facing the storms which blew at the boat of Islam from all directions so as to sink it into the deep sea.

News sources announced that he had a heart attack while lecturing on "Islam and the West" in Riyadh. Verily the Knight fell with his sword in his hand!

And I count him among the martyrs by the will of Allah, since he died while calling to Islam, and was a stranger to the world and its temptations as well.

I knew that Sheikh Al-Ghazali had a heart condition for several years, and that doctors advised him firmly not to travel because his health could not withstand it. But the Sheikh was not able to refuse the call of an Islamic activity.

That's why he traveled few months ago to America representing the Assembly of Islamic Research. And I was surprised when I read last week that he went to Riyadh to participate in the "Islam and West" workshop although he had kindly refused several previous invitations for lecturing last Ramadan.

Towards the Prophet

It seems that Allah (swt) destined that the Sheikh travel this time towards a fate familiar to him, and which the Sheikh held close to his heart: to be buried near the Prophet (saw) at the Baqee' cemetary. This is the place where he wrote his valuable book *Fiqh as-Seerah*, mixing his tears with his ink, in love and affection for the Prophet (saw).

50 Years or More

I have known the Sheikh and Imam for around a half century. I knew in him a wise mind, a pure heart, a pleasing manner, and stalwart resolution.

I found in Al-Ghazali nothing but honesty in belief, correctness in wordings, sincerity in work, guidance in thoughts, purity in manners, bravery in saying the truth, enmity of vanity, steadfastness in the message, love of that which is good, care about justice, hate of transgression, support for the weak, a desire to fight against the arrogant, regardless what power they possessed.

I knew him as a man who lives for Islam, and Islam alone. Islam is his flesh and bones, his day and night, and his beginning and end.

He lived as a guardian of the castle of Islam. Whenever an enemy approached it to infiltrate it, he used to shout with his loudest voice, to wake up the sleepy and warn the inadvertent. I think he was such, and Allah is the Accounting One for him.

You may have a different opinion than his in one or more issues, and you may criticize him for some of his opinions, but you cannot doubt his honesty and sincerity. In any case, he has his "ijtihaad" in understanding of the religion, and in serving it the best way he believes.

So, if he is right, he has two rewards, and if he is wrong, he has one.

His Legacy

Sheikh Al-Ghazali left clear fingerprints on the Islamic mind, not to be erased by the difference of day and night: tens of books, hundreds of essays, thousands of orations, lectures, and sessions, and a countless number of speeches in radio and TV.

He also had many students who learned from him in the different universities he worked in; al-Azhar in Egypt, Um-ul Qurra in Mecca, the faculty of Shari'a in Qatar, and Price Abdul-Aziz University in Algeria.

The Sheikh has taught his students the balance between reason and Prophetic narraration, between primary and secondary religious concepts, and between religion and worldly life.

He has never obeyed those who want to abandon Prophetic wisdom in the name of some percieved benefit, nor those who want to reject Prophetic narrations in the name of rationalization, nor those who wanted to provoke a fight between Islam and development.

He used to tell those who wanted Islam to "develop": Why don't you ask "development" to be a Muslim?

Some people may reject some of the Sheikh's opinions, merely because they did not bow to their own desires. Instead what I know is that Sheikh Al-Ghazali's opinions never went away from the confirmed *ijma'* (consensus) of the Ummah.

Meeting in Jail

I knew Sheikh Al-Ghazali-from up close-when we were in "Al-Toor" jail in Egypt. I also knew him after our incarceration, lived with him, and accompanied him in his travels. I found the Shaikh, who is so firm in his debates, like thunder, like a lion, like a warrior....

I found him - from up close - a human being with a heart full of sympathy, a quick tear, a pure inner presence; a clear spirit, sweet company, a kind manner, a smiling face, easy going, a gentle orator, quick with the pun, simple, humble, soft, and distant from showing off, complications and false claims.

He used to cry quickly when he saw or heard of human affliction. He used to shake in submission and affection when he remembered Allah and the hereafter. He was never too haughty to learn, even from his own students.

His Life

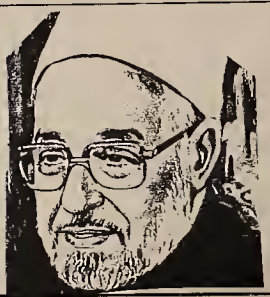
The late Shiekh lived all his life with freedom of thought tongue and pen. He never worshiped anyone but Allah, and never sold his pen to any creature whatsoever. So many times did the people of power try to buy him!

However, they couldn't afford his price: how can one buy a man who's price is none other than Allah and paradise ? So many times did they dangle titles in front of his face - titles which so many of the slaves of this world would drool over - but the Shiekh never surrendered. Neither to a promise, nor a threat !

Two Fights

The Shiekh's fate was to fight in two vast fronts: The first one, against the enemies of Islam who want to see it in bad shape, who hate the spread of its lights and its return to lead civilization once again, and the second one against the ignorant friends of Islam who harm Islam badly while they are try to benefit it. The

(Continued on page 2)



Finally, the brilliant star has dropped,
the high mountain was demolished,
the waving flag was folded,
the rising sun disappeared,
the horsemen-teacher walked awey
.. and..
Shiekh Al-Ghazeli died !
And finally,
the Islamic Ummah lost the Signpost of Signposts,
the Shiekh of Islam,
the Leader of Eloquence, and the Man of the Quran.
And finally,
a pen was sheathed after it had been a sword,
drawn at the enemies of Allah, never bent.
So many times had it scared the atheists and the hypocrites!
a tongue was stilled after 60 years
of proclaiming the Call to Allah,
gathering people by the thousands in his court,
arranging them in rows at his beckoning....

Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali in English

There are several books by Sheikh Ghazali that are available in English. These include:

Remembrance and Prayer, a beautiful book on how the Prophet developed a constant awareness of God through prayer and supplications;

The Muslim's Character, on the characteristics of a Muslim personality. Each characteristic is explained beautifully, with the relevant Qur'anic and Hadith and insights on how to inculcate these characteristics;

The Message of Islam at the Eve of the 15th Century Hijra, a survey of Islamic history in terms of key issues the Islamic Mission has and continues to face, and how these can be dealt with.

[note: don't confuse Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali with Hujjat al-Islam Imam Abu Hamid al-Ghazali]

Remembering the Late Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali

A Man of Conviction and Concern

By Wael Haddara

I have never had the opportunity to meet al-Shaikh Al-Ghazali, *rahimahullah* , in person. The closest contact I had with him was by phone, when I spoke to him last year to ask him to come to a conference in North America. He was unable to come, he said, because his health did not allow him to travel that much any more.

I think that was the first time that the thought struck me how old he was. Most of us knew Al-Shaikh Al-Ghazali only through his writings and those seemed unaffected by his advancing years.

A Story Remembered

One of the few stories that remains in my mind about Al-Shaikh Al-Ghazali is one told by Dr. Yusuf Al-Qaradawi in his book *Islamic Education and the School of Hasan Al-Banna.*

When the *Ikhwan* (Muslim Brotherhood) were arrested and imprisoned in Egypt in the late 40s, al-Shaikh al-Qaradawi relates how their experience enabled them to use their time in the best way in the prison camps.

One of the most moving experiences he remembers was the voice of al-Shaikh al-Ghazali making du'aa at the end of each prayer:

"O Allah we ask you to release us from our imprisonment, to break our shackles with your power, to envelope us with your Mercy, to support us against your enemy ..."

Anger and Sadness

Reading through most of al-Shaikh al-Ghazali's books you feel a strong sense of anger and sadness for the situation that Muslims are now in.

He wrote once, "I looked at the names of the top ten industrial nations in the world, and it pained me not to see the name of a single Muslim nation in those top ten, nor in the succeeding ten names, nor in the third ten, nor in the fourth." You feel the emotions of a man who lived only for Islam.

Two Types of People

"I am always saddened, as many others are, by two types of people : One in whom you feel a strong emotion and a deep attachment to Allah and a profound love for His Prophet, but in spite of that, his knowledge of the rules of the Qur'an and the Sunnah is weak, he knows little, and is ignorant of much. He is tempted by his emotions to adhere blindly to the little that he knows and refuses to follow the knowledge of others he perhaps feel lack that strength of feeling he has.

Sheikh Muhammad al-Ghazali
A lifetime in the way of Allah

"Another type: Those in whom you sense an intelligent mind, vast knowledge, who know the correct Islamic opinion in most matters, and fulfill their obligations in a satisfactory manner. But at the same time, they are cold, harsh, hard of heart. You sense as if they wish others would commit mistakes so they may denounce them and that they may stand out the more for what they know of fiqh and scholarship.

"I have met both types of people... But the true Muslim is complete: there is light in his heart and in his mind. His thinking and his emotions both are entwined in their attachment to Allah and in dealing with people. You do not know what is more impressive: their knowledge or their behaviour. You can not tell which is more beautiful : their flowing emotion or their flowing genius."

Three Recent Losses

In the past few months, the Muslim world has lost at least three of its valuable scholars : Al-Shaikh Al-Ghazali; Al-Shaikh Gad al-Haque, the Shaikh al-Azhar; and al-Ustadh Abdul-Haleem Abu Shuqqah, author of *Women's Liberation in the Age of the Prophet.*

All three of them made contributions that we will sorely miss. We ask Allah (SWT) to accept them into His Mercy, and to make their works in the sake of Allah, in the balance of their good deeds on of Day of Judgement and to allow us to follow in their paths, and to be as they were, servants for Islam and for our Ummah.

GHAZALI ON GHAZALI

Excerpts from the Sheikh's Writings

My childhood was an average one, nothing abnormal. It was only characterized by my love to reading. I was reading everything ... reading while walking, and reading while eating ...

Imam Hasan al-Banna

The man who affected me the most was the martyred Imam Hasan Al-Banna. He was as understanding as a scholar in creed and legislation can ever be. In the same time, he was a fluent speaker.

His words were principles and realities. He was understanding the tough situation of Islam after the collapse of the khilafa ... He was opposing this destructive flood by forming Islamic groups which stick to the truth despite any hardship they would face ...

Not a second, and I wouldn't say a minute, passed by Hasan Al-Banna without him serving Islam by a word, an advice, a useful work, or even a light humor which fostered the ties of hearts ... I need a book to talk about this man.

Understanding

... The correct vision of the rules of Islamic legislation cannot be achieved unless there is a strong background of current and ancient knowledge as well ...

Problematic Callers

I noticed that there are people in the field of the Islamic da'wa who spoil Islam's reputation badly; some forbid everything without even presenting a substitute which people need .. as if he is stopping people on their way and order them to stand still not to guide them to a more correct one.

Some others live in the past, as if Islam is a historical religion, and not for the present and the future.

You found him so angry at the Mu'tazalah and Jahmiyyah and he is right in what he is saying. The problem is that he forgets that the challenges which currently face Islam have changed and have other titles and arguments.

Other inviters (du'aah) don't differentiate between shape and reality, or between the stem and the branch ... Those people have unbalance in the ratios of things in their minds, and they are fighting in the wrong direction ...

Working for what?

After 40 years of Islamic da'wa, I now realize that the most dangerous thing which faces Islamic work is the corrupt devotion. I mean working for Islam in shape and, in reality, working for illusions, or sometimes, working for personal desires ...

In fact, this corrupt devotion is the secret behind the desition of many intellects, because they look at religion through the manners of some of its men and their effect on the public life. In fact, some devoted Muslims were, in the past and in the present, a misfortune to Islam ...

Tha Pivots

... There are some pivots around which I wrote all my previous books: Islam, mind and heart, and, Islam and the idle energies ... "

May Allah grant our late Shaykh Mohammed Al-Ghazali paradise, reward him for the good he has done in multiples, and forgive his sins. Ameen.

Sheikh al-Qaradawi on Sheikh al-Ghazali

(Continued from page 1)

Shiekh called them "the misguided inviters".

"Some youth have succeeded in turning the tree of Islamic teachings upside down. They considered the light branches stems or roots, and they consider the important fundamentals as leafs which fall with the wind!" That's precisely what scared the Imam and Shiekh, and made him concerned about the future of the Ummah.

He said, may Allah bless him: "I was fearful for the future of our Ummah when I found that some of those who are busy with the sciences of Hadith lack *fiqh* (understanding of religion), while passing themselves off as people of *fiqh* and then as people of political methodology, aiming to change society and state. The most surprising thing about this malicious type of religious thought is that it knows nothing about the constitution of governing, class struggle, the problems of our youth, the crisis of the family, and educating one to good manners.

"Furthermore, type of religious thought knows nothing about using civil life and societal reform for serving the high objectives which Islam came with. Indeed, sick minds know nothing but to aggrandize trivial problems, and in the pursuit of these problems they seethe with rage, and according to their own words, they divide people into 'friends' and 'enemies'...."

Farewell

Our beloved Shiekh, the Ummah has lost you while it is in bad need of you! The Ummah has lost you while the fight between Islam and its enemies is at its peak!

Enemies are coming from above and from below, eyes grow wild and hearts leap up to the throats, and people are imagining vain thoughts concerning Allah,

"There were the believers sorely tried, and shaken with a mighty shock."(Qur'an)

We are in need of your sword-like pen, your pen-like sword, to fight in defence of the truth from vanity, in defence of belief from disbelief, in defence of Islam which is now besieged by chauvanistic Judaists, Western-style Zionism, and the Eastern-style idolatry.

They want no fire in it for jihad, no candle for da'wa, no voice for the awakening. But we have learned from you that the work of Allah is stronger and faster than theirs !

Our beloved Shiekh, I can't find words at your level of eloquence to bid you farewell. All what I say is: The eye is crying and the heart is sad, but we will say nothing but what pleases our Lord:

Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raji'oon

Verily we are from Allah, and verily unto Him shall we return !

Dr. Qaradawi is a prominent scholar.

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Organization and Vision

The Need for Direction

By Wael Haddara

One of the great dilemmas facing Muslim communities and organizations today is related to organizational solvency.

By solvency, I mean the fact that few such organizations have clear vision or understanding of the path they need to take in order to reach their goals. In some instances, the goals themselves are not clear...

A Strange Phenomenon

I find this strange in Muslims, of all people. We have occupied ourselves with the less important to the detriment of the more important.

We have spent inordinate amounts of time and energy in ensuring that we have ornate mosques and Islamically resounding titles such as "Majlis Shura" and "Amir".

Sometimes we have made a concession to the environment we live in which can be seen in designations such as "Vice Amir".

Vision

But the problem remains that, not only do we not have vision, but we lack an understanding of what vision is or the need for it.

Al-Imam Ja'far ibn Muhammad Al-Sadiq is said to have made the following observation:

"Allah (swt) has created us for a certain purpose, and He has required from us certain matters. Why He has created us is hidden from us. What He requires from us, He has made known to us. So why is it that we are more occupied with what He hid from us, than what He made known to us ?"

The point of the observation, of course, is that Islam has given us clear direction and clear guidelines as to what we should strive for in this life. Yet there are those who set aside the pursuit of these goals to indulge in matters which are largely irrelevant. The example given was the purpose of the Creation, but there are numerous other examples. The point remains that Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* has given us clear directives in the Qur'an that we should follow.

Islam has given us clear direction and clear guidelines as to what we should strive for in this life.

We all say that Allah (swt) has sent down the Qur'an as the Final Revelation. However, our perspective of the Qur'an differs dramatically when it comes to understanding what it means.

Mission?

Some Muslims view the notion of "vision" as an intrusive concept alien to Islam. Some laugh at the mention of the need for a mission statement.

Yet, when we look at the life of the Prophet (saw), we find that it progressed along very clear lines.

He did not hesitate, nor did he equivocate at any point in time. He proceeded with sure footed steps during his entire life until he passed away.

"But" some will say, "The Prophet (saw) was inspired. Allah (swt) revealed to him."

And we will say "Exactly!" This revelation that the Prophet (saw) received is with us today. The challenge is for us to understand it in its proper light.

The Islamic Vision

In Surat Al-Hajj, we find this all encompassing vision for Muslims:

" O you who believe bow down, prostrate yourselves and worship your Lord, and do good deeds that you may be successful. And strive in His cause as best as should be (with sincerity and under discipline). He has chosen and had imposed no difficulties on you in religion; it is the religion of your father Ibrahim. It is he who has named you Muslims, both before, and in this revelation, That the Prophet may be a witness for you and you be witnesses for humanity. So establish regular prayers, give of your wealth in charity, and hold fast to Allah! He is your Protector - the best to protect and the best to help." (Al-Hajj: 77-78)

These two verses contain in their few words what is required from Muslims in all aspects of their lives.

They contain references to the worship of Allah (swt) as the prerequisite to all other things; the duty devolving upon the Muslim to serve and do good to others; the importance of making all effort in the path of Allah (swt) and the conditions for it; the perspective of Islam on humanity and our descent from the Father of the Prophets (as); the task of the Muslim community being witnesses unto humanity and the sources of guidance that are essential for the community to achieve that status; lastly, an affirmation of the all-important notion that there will be no success in any affair unless the sincere belief and worship of Allah (swt) is at its base.

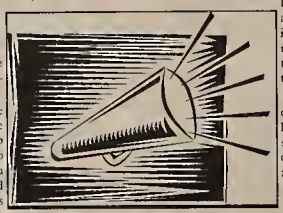
These verses summarize the Vision, the Mission Statement and the Plan of the Muslim individual and community.

Educational Process

Implicit in these verses are the following points: the need for the Muslim community to ensure a process for educating Muslims and raising faith and awareness such that they match the requirements described both at the beginning and the end of the verses with respect to sincerity in worship.

This may seem rather intuitive. But in fact, we have seen in North America that it is not.

After more than thirty years of continued Muslim presence in this continent, we have no overarching mechanism for educating our youth and no method of evaluating the effectiveness of whatever scattered educational efforts there are.



Once more, we have been unable to understand our responsibility... [and to] translate that understanding into action.

This does not mean that no efforts were made, but that whatever efforts were undertaken have not achieved their desired results.

We continue to see a crisis in commitment to Islam and Islamic behaviour not only amongst the broad Muslim community, but also within our very mosques and organizations.

In other words, amongst those who are most committed.

There is an admonition to "do good". Islam is undoubtedly the epitome of all good.

But until recently (and in many instances this is still the case), our activities as Muslim communities have been restricted to building mosques, holding lectures, organizing sunday schools and social dinners.

The world suffers from untold miseries - poverty, disease, ignorance, violence and a myriad of social ills.

Once more, we have been unable to understand our responsibility to our fellow humans, Muslims and non-Muslims, and translate that understanding into action.

I will discuss only one other item from the verses - the call to strive in the Cause of Allah (swt) with sincerity and under discipline.

There can be no real implementation of Islam, in all seriousness, without organization. It is clear now to all who are active in Islamic work that simply raising the banner of "Islam" is insufficient for unity. When all is said and done, there are varying understandings of the requirements of Islam and the goals and objectives of the Muslims.

This lack of agreement on such issues is, I believe, at the root of dissensions and difficulties in our mosques and organizations.

Need for Community Vision

We need, therefore, to establish a vision for the Muslim community.

We need to recognize the difference and disparities amongst Muslims today, and evolve a vision that is able to rise above these differences and bring Muslims together under the shade of the Qur'an and Sunnah in true understanding.

"Now we have brought to them The Word in order that they may be reminded." (Al-Qassas: 51)

Talk and Action

A wise man once said, "After all is said and done, much more is said than done."

Value of Time

Hujjat al-Islam Imam al-Ghazali wrote that: "Your time is your life, and your life is your capital; it is the basis of your transactions [with God], and the means to attain everlasting felicity, in the proximity of God the Exalted.

Each of your breath is a priceless (irreplaceable) jewel, and when it passes away it never returns."

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Islam: A Distorted Vision?

The Misportrayal of Islam Distorts People's Understanding and Veils its True

By Ahmad Balkaran

As we approach the end of the 20th century, religion has once again become a force to be reckoned with. Even though we are witnessing a widespread revival which would have seemed inconceivable for many people four decades ago, when secularists tended to assume that religion was a primitive superstition, outgrown by civilised, rational man.

In the West, people have little interest in conventional doctrines while institutional churches have shown a new awareness of spirituality. Most dramatically, perhaps, a radical religiosity, which they call "fundamentalism", has erupted in Islam. It is an intensely political form of faith and some see it as a grave danger to world peace.

On both sides of the Atlantic, the old hatred of Islam continues to flourish, and people have few scruples about attacking this religion, even if they know little about it. This is understandable, because until the rise of the Soviet Union in our own century, no polity or ideology posed such a continuous challenge to the West as Islam.

When the Muslim empire was established in the 7th century CE, Europe was a backward region. Islam had quickly overrun much of the Christian world. This brilliant success was threatening. The Ottoman Turks brought Islam to the very doorstep of Europe. This fear made it impossible for Western Christians to be rational or objective about the Muslim faith.

At the time when they were weaving fearful fantasies about Jews, they were also evolving a distorted image of Islam, which reflected their own buried anxieties. Western scholars denounced Islam as a blasphemous faith and our Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as the Great Pretender, who had founded a violent Religion of the Sword in order to conquer the world. There were plays and other imaginary acts that displayed our Prophet in this cruel and violent way.

This inaccurate image of Islam became one of the received ideas of Europe, and it continues to affect the West's perceptions of our Muslim world. This problem has been compounded by the fact that for the first time in Islamic history, many Muslims have begun to cultivate a passionate hatred of the West. It is a mistake for one to imagine Islam as an inherently violent and fanatical faith as it is sometimes labelled.

When Muslims first encountered the colonial West during the 18th century, many were impressed by its modern civilization and even tried to emulate it. But in recent years this initial enthusiasm has given way to bitter resentment. "Fundamentalist" and "fanatical" became the prevalent labels for those opposed to these imitative trends.

But have the Jews who made illegal settlement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and who have vowed to drive all Arabs from their holy land ever received the label of 'fundamentalist'?

Of course we don't always get the right coverage from the Western media. Far more coverage was given to Muslims who supported Ayatollah Khomeini's *fatwa* against British author Salman Rushdie than to the majority who opposed it.

To place Islam into a whole category of its own, or to assume that its influence has been wholly or predominantly negative, is both unproductive and unjust. In fact, Islam shares many of the ideals and visions that have inspired both Judaism and Christianity.

Islam demonstrates decency, compassion and respect for humanity, though these views are not probably shared by a majority of the Westerners. Most important, the beauty of Islam is that it constitutes one Brotherhood.

Palestine still an Islamic Cause

(Continued from page 1)

collapse through underground excavations. The Jews Know that Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa is symbolic of the Islamic nature of the land and want to remove any trace of Islamic civilization from Palestine.

In December 1987, the Palestinians began an uprising (Intifada) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against the continued Jewish occupation. The Intifada is still alive and strong in its 5th year. Despite thousands of deaths and injuries, the Palestinians are determined to maintain the struggle for their rights and dignity.

THE CONFLICT

When looking at the significance of Palestine within the Islamic faith and the central role it has played throughout Islamic history, the real nature of the conflict is a civilizational conflict waged between, on the one land Islamic Civilization with its divinely inspired laws and mission to create on this earth the society of justice and freedom which has been ordained by God; and on the other hand, Western Civilization with its materialistic culture, worship of ethnicity and the state, and denial of God's supremacy.

The existence of a Jewish state in the heart of the Muslim World and the occupation of Masjid Al-Aqsa is symbolic of the weakness of the Muslim Ummah and Muslims' own straying from the path of Islam in embracing imported ideologies. Masjid Al-Aqsa, Baitul-Maqdis, and the Blessed Lands of Palestine do not belong to the Palestinians or Arabs alone but to all Muslims, and only when the Muslim's return to their faith and see the conflict in its real terms can they liberate Palestine as was done in the 12th Century by Salah al-Din Al-Ayyubi who, while not an Arab, knew his Islamic responsibility in undertaking the civilization struggle against the West and Islam.

ISLAM: SOLUTION

Based on Palestine's Islamic history and significance in the Islamic faith, and after the failure of all non-Islamic methods to free Palestine from Zionist occupation, the Islamic solution is re-emerging as a powerful and popular means to liberate the occupied lands. Islam is a religion of peace secured by divine justice.

Only Islam offers respect to all divinely revealed religions as it is the only religion which recognizes all the Prophets from Adam to Muhammad (PBUH). It is the only religion which recognizes and believes that all the prophets brought the same essential message and thus all people deserve the freedom to worship as they please without persecution or harassment.

For this reason, it has historically proven itself to be the only tolerant religion with regard to the peace and sanctity of the Holy Land.

Only Islam can bring back peace to the Holy Land and security for the unrestricted and unharassed worship of God, the All-Mighty, by all who believe in Him whether Muslim, Christian, or Jew.

All Muslims, regardless of their ethnic background, nationality or language, are asked to join in freeing Palestine in the way Salah al-Din Al-Ayyubi, a Kurd, helped in the freeing of Palestine in an earlier era.

As for their part, the Palestinian people have regained new strength in their rediscovery of Islam. As Muslims they prefer death and martyrdom determined to fight for justice, be it only with stones.

Forty three years of occupation have brought neither peace nor stability to the Holy Land and history has proven that there can never be peace without justice.

There will be no justice until all of the land is given back to its rightful owners who have been driven out of it.

Any political plan which does not restore Palestine to its rightful owners, the Muslims, and any plan which does no bring back rule by Islamic law will not bring about real peace and will thus only lead to further violence, bloodshed, and instability.

For more information on Palestine, please visit the IAP Web-site at http://www.io.org/~iap

The People of Taqwa

According to Sayyidna Ali

Attributed to Imam Ali (may Allah ennoble his countenance):

"The people of taqwa on earth are those of virtue: their speech is correct (true); their garments are of moderate nature and their walk is one of humility. They lower their gazes when they see something that Allah has forbidden them to see and they give an ear to beneficial knowledge.

They maintain their integrity in both adversity and prosperity.

Had it not been for the appointed time that Allah has written for them (death), their souls would not remain an extra second in their bodies out of yearning for reward and fear of punishment.

The Creator ranks Supreme in their eyes, so everything else becomes unmaterial to them.

They are with Paradise as if they have already witnessed it and enjoyed its presence.

They are with Hell as if they had seen it and tasted its torment. Their hearts grieve and their evil (if any) is non-contagious.

Their bodies are lean, their needs are few and their souls are chaste.

They observe patience for a few days and experience everlasting comfort. This is a profitable exchange that their Lord has made pleasant for them.

The world tempts them, but they do not succumb. It impresses them, but they ransomed themselves in exchange.

During the nights they stand in rows and read portions of the Quran. They recite with proper recitation which grieves their hearts and drink it like medicine. If a verse of yearning comes along, they reach for it and believe it is their destination. If an intimidating verse comes along, they pour their hearts towards it and believe that Hell and its screams are in their ears. They sleep on their foreheads and elbows [long prostrations] and implore Allah to deliver them.

In the day, they are tolerant and learned, kind and God-fearing. Fear has chipped away their bodies as if they were arrows. Anyone looking at them would think that they were sick. But they are not sick. Some will say that they are confused. A great fear has made them look like that.

They are never content to do only a few actions, nor do they ask for a great deal.

They condemn themselves and are apprehensive about their deeds. If one of them is called "pious", he fears what will be said of him and says:

'I know myself better than you do. My Lord knows me better than I do. O Allah! Do not take me to task for what they are saying about me and (O Lord) make me better than they think. Forgive my sins which they do not know about.'

Their signs are that they are strong in Islam, resolute in their softness, firm in their belief. They crave for knowledge and are knowledgeable with tolerance; moderate in richness; pleasant in hunger, forbearing in distress; seeking halal, active in (pursuing) guidance and they abhor greed.

They perform good deeds in fear (of rejection). They spend the evening in gratitude and the morning in remembrance. They sleep in alarm and they awake in joy.

They combine knowledge with tolerance and speech with action.

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